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July 10, 2019

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings Chairman Committee on Oversight and Reform US House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515 The Honorable James D. Jordan Ranking Member Committee on Oversight and Reform US House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cummings and Ranking member Jordan:

The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) commends you for holding a hearing on the long-term consequences of childhood trauma as an urgent public health issue. We share this concern, particularly as it pertains to the impact of childhood trauma on older adults.

JFNA supports one of the largest networks of social service providers in the United States. Our affiliated agencies provide a full continuum of human services to more than one million of the nation's most vulnerable citizens, annually. Within this context, caring for older adults has always been a priority, and among some of the most vulnerable older adults we serve are Holocaust survivors.

Since 2015, JFNA's Center for Advancing Holocaust Survivor Care has partnered with the U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL) to develop innovations in person-centered, trauma informed (PCTI) care for Holocaust survivors. With most of the nation's estimated 80,000 Holocaust survivors now in their 80s and 90s and many facing poor health and economic hardship, there is an imperative to develop and implement PCTI methods for this extremely vulnerable population, and to expand lessons learned to other traumatized older populations, such as veterans, first responders, victims or manmade and natural disasters, and those who were otherwise traumatized as children.

It is currently estimated that between 70% and 90% of Americans 65 and older have experienced at least one traumatic event in their lifetime. By 2029, 20 percent of the U.S. population will be over the age of 65. As America's 74 million baby boomers face the challenges and transitions of aging, the need to add a focus on trauma to the nation's health and social service delivery systems has never been more urgent. In this regard, as the Committee examines the long-term consequences of childhood trauma and the appropriate federal response, we ask that you consider what needs to be done to help children and families impacted by trauma as they age.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Goldberg

Senior Director, Legislative Affairs